

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/646,249	EIRIKSSON ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ram N. Kackar	1763	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to Amendment dated 12/19/2005.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 3-10.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 - of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Amend claim 1 as below:

An apparatus for supporting a thin, planar workpiece comprising;
a plenum in fluid communication with a gas supply and comprising a workpiece support flange having an inner diameter slightly smaller than an outer diameter of the workpiece;
an edge ring that movably rests on the support flange and contacts an outer edge of the workpiece and wherein the edge ring has an inner diameter slightly smaller than the outer diameter of the workpiece and an outer diameter slightly larger than an outer diameter of the workpiece and wherein when the workpiece is placed on the support flange an outer edge of the workpiece rests upon the edge ring; and

wherein when a workpiece is placed on the support flange and gas is supplied to the plenum the edge ring is lifted by the gas in contact with the outer edge of the workpiece such that the inner diameter of the support flange coacts with an outer diameter of the edge ring to define a gas flow path through which the supplied gas flows when the edge ring and the workpiece are lifted from off the support flange.

Amend claim 8 as below:

An apparatus for supporting a thin, planar workpiece comprising;
a plenum in fluid communication with a gas supply and comprising a workpiece

support flange having an inner diameter slightly smaller than an outer diameter of the workpiece;

locating structure disposed about a periphery of the support flange that maintains the workpiece location with respect to the support flange;

a wafer edge ring that moveably movably rests on the workpiece support flange and is maintained in position by the locating structure, the edge ring comprising an inner diameter slightly smaller than the outer diameter of the workpiece and an outer diameter slightly larger than the outer diameter of the workpiece; and

wherein when a workpiece is placed on the edge ring and gas is supplied to the plenum the edge ring is lifted by the gas in contact with the outer edge of the workpiece such that the inner diameter of the support flange coacts with an outer diameter of the edge ring to define a gas flow path through which the supplied gas flows when the edge ring and the workpiece are lifted from off the support flange.

Cancel withdrawn claims 11-13.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Ms. Jennifer Nock Hinton on 3/7/2006.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Claims 1 and 8 are allowable in view of the amendments and the clarification (by examiners amendment) that the edge ring lifts off the support flange to float over gas while supporting the workpiece.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ram N. Kackar whose telephone number is 571 272 1436. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 A.M to 5:P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Parviz Hassanzadeh can be reached on 571 272 1435. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ram Kackar

Ram Kackar
Primary Examiner AU 1763